



Atlanta Antifascists

Atlanta, November 4: Far-Right Counters “Antifa” Uprising of its Own Imagination

On November 4, the Leftist anti-Trump organization Refuse Fascism held protests in several major US cities, including Atlanta. [Refuse Fascism is a national mobilization spearheaded by the Revolutionary Communist Party \(RCP\), a Maoist group that dates to the 1970s.](#) Through building on widespread disgust towards the Trump regime, Refuse Fascism has engaged some numbers beyond the RCP's cadre of organizers. Peaceful mass rallies on November 4 were supposed to usher in a wave of protest to “drive out the Trump/Pence regime,” although the details of getting from A to B were hazy.

In the end, the November 4 call to action captured the imagination of the far-Right just as much — if not more — than it did working class people fed up with Trump's rule (or even other Leftist organizers.) On widely-circulated social media posts, YouTube videos and stories on Right-wing websites, [the November 4th protests were portrayed as an “antifa” plot to usher in civil war](#), with likely mass violence that day. As nonsensical as November 4 conspiracy theories were, many on the far-Right paid attention and believed them. Just as the “Pizzagate” conspiracy theory led to a true believer firing shots in a restaurant, some observers began to worry that “antifa” “civil war” hype could lead to real violence from people determined to play hero against an imaginary threat.

While “Refuse Fascism” and “antifascists” include variants on the same term, “antifa” groups such as our organization were generally not involved in November 4 planning or promotion — a point that seems to have been missed by portions of media, even though [a quick glance at our social media](#) could have cleared up any confusion.

In Atlanta on the evening of the 4th, Refuse Fascism rallied in Little Five Points, attracting several dozen to their protest. Large amounts of police staged nearby. A group of counter-protesters waved an American flag catty-corner from the Refuse Fascism event. Other Right-wing individuals moved within in or infiltrated the Refuse Fascism crowd. Heavy rains brought the entire spectacle to an early end. There were no clashes.

The remainder of this article sets out which far-Right forces did and did not show up for the anticlimactic “civil war” in Atlanta.



Far-Right counter-protesters plus cops aplenty, catty-corner from Little Five Points “Refuse Fascism” protest

The No-Shows

Some of those who made the most noise about countering “antifa” on November 4 did not make a public show on the day.

The Georgia Security Force militia, part of the broader III% Security Force militia led by Georgia paralegal Chris Hill, had for over a month been hyping November 4th as an approaching violent uprising. (The III% Security Force is part of the [broader “Three Percenter” Right-wing militia movement](#).) Hill was adamant that the III% Security Force would not “stand down” on November, in opposition to other leaders in the decentralized militia movement who believed matters should be left to the police and national guard. The III% Security Force Facebook page was [full of blood-thirsty chatter from supporters about how they looked forward to shooting “live targets” on the day](#). Despite all this — and [despite the III% Security Force sharing the Atlanta “Refuse Fascism” information on their Facebook page](#) — Chris Hill and the Georgia Security Force did not have an armed show of force in Little Five Points, instead gathering away from the scene and posing with their firearms.



Chris Hill @GSFIII · Nov 5
Nov 4th. #GSFIII% #GunsUp



Georgia Security Force militia: November 4 group photo

James Stachowiak, [an Islamophobic far-Right agitator based in Georgia](#), was even more explicit about his plans for the 4th, stating that his “unit” (also Three Percenters, but not affiliated with Chris Hill) would be heading to Atlanta and would make an armed stand, burning communist flags and pouring pig’s blood on a Quran. Nothing of the kind happened.



James Stachowiak

Far-Right Forces in Little 5 Points, November 4

(A) Proud Boys

The largest far-Right organized presence that approached Little Five Points on November 4th were [the Proud Boys, a “Western Chauvinist” fraternity that overlaps with white nationalists and militiamen, but which also accepts reactionary people of color as members](#). Before the “Refuse Fascism” protest took place, the Proud Boys in Georgia sent out a message suggesting that they had infiltrated the anti-Trump organizing.



Proud Boys Georgia @ProudBoysGA · Nov 4

You never know how long certain groups have been infiltrated.



@refusefascatl @MetroATLDSA



Refuse Fascism ATL @refusefascatl

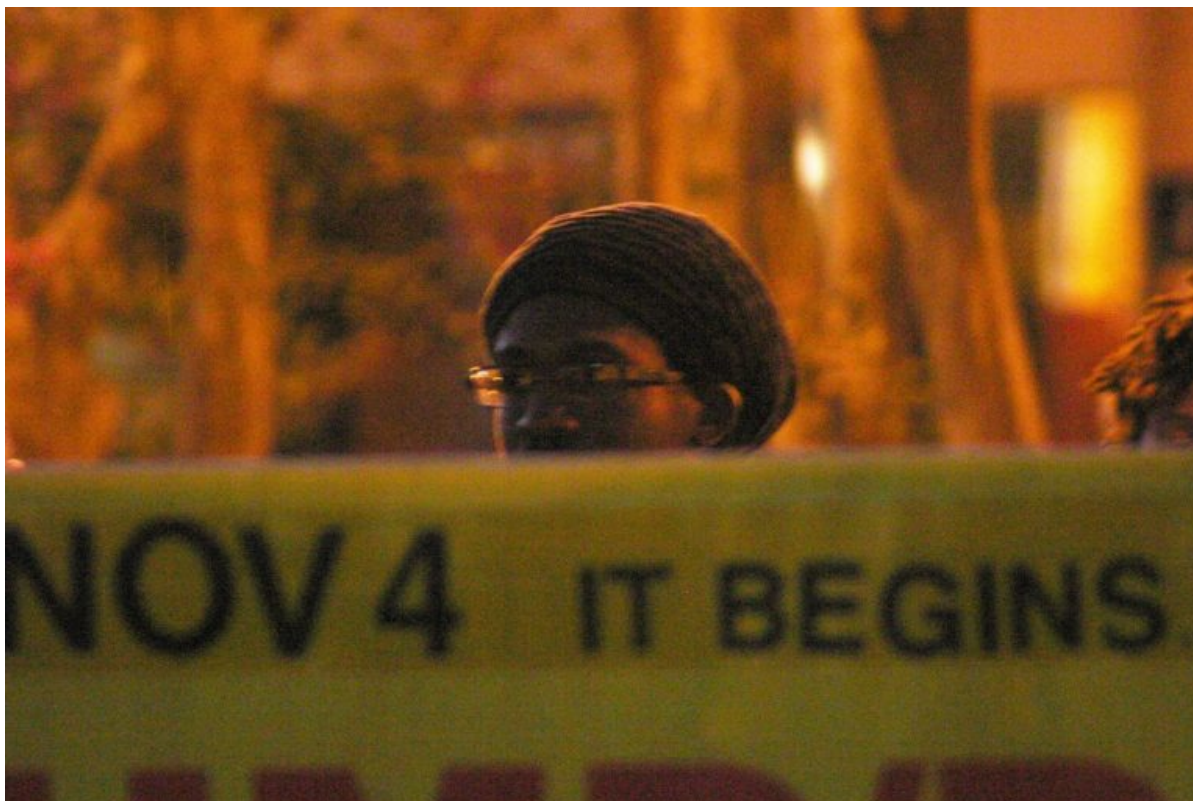
#Nov4ItBegins — Rally & March launching from #L5P Sat. TODAY @ 6 pm. TRUMP/PENCE MUST GO! nov4atl.com #NoFascistUSA #Atlanta



Proud Boys Georgia message on Twitter.

One of the most visible members of the Proud Boys in Atlanta is Yosef Ozia (Joseph Norman Ozia), a Black man. In his livestream of the event, Ozia is shown marching into Little Five Points with five white associates, one of them carrying a US flag. Once the group neared the “Refuse Fascism” protest, police set up barriers and kept them on the other side of the street. Ozia however slipped away, going over to the “Refuse Fascism” side. There he met another Proud Boy, Jonathan Stevens, who was already loitering with a female companion. (Jonathan Stevens, Yosef Ozia, and another Proud Boy named Andrew Canfield — one of people in the main counter-protest on the other side of the street November 4 — all also attended the Islamophobic [“March Against Sharia” event in Atlanta this June](#), where Proud Boys comprised the second largest organized group after the Georgia Security Force militia.)

Yosef Ozia was last seen on November 4 behind a Refuse Fascism banner. The contingent that arrived with Ozia but which was told to stay across the street catty-corner from the anti-Trump protest, eventually crossed and moved as a group toward their opponents while chanting “USA! USA!” They were turned back by police. When the rain cut the Refuse Fascism protest short, Ozia’s associates returned to their vehicles.



Atlanta Proud Boy personality Yosef Ozia behind “Refuse Fascism” banner

(B) Miscellaneous “Alt-Lite” Participants

Individuals associated with the “Alt-Lite” — that is, people who agree with the Alt-Right’s anti-feminist, anti-leftist, immigrant-bashing and Islamophobic agenda, but who stop short of explicitly embracing white nationalism — also tried to counter the “Refuse Fascism” event. One individual showed up with a sign promoting Alex Jones’ conspiracy-mongering InfoWars website. Earlier, he had stuck a trail of InfoWars stickers throughout the area.

Other “Alt-Lite” figures showed up to livestream the event. One of them, “American nationalist” Joe Proenza, tried to pass himself off as a leftist (which for him meant not shaving and wearing state of California clothing.) Another Alt-Lite figure, Bitcoin enthusiast William Blackburn, just went as himself to livestream.

(C) White Nationalists

As well as the Alt-Lite, white nationalists also showed up in Little Five Points. [Cameron Padgett](#), who describes himself as an “Identitarian” and who arranges [college speaking dates](#) for white power leader Richard Spencer, showed up to do his own livestream. Padgett has recently started to do livestreaming events to build his social media presence — in October, [Padgett showed up at an apartment complex to antagonize working class Latinx residents there](#). Padgett seemed pleased that he was mostly not recognized by the anti-Trump crowd on November 4, but also imagined himself surrounded by “Antifa” and stated that he had to “watch my back,” expressing gratitude that there were police around.



Cameron Padgett

Other explicit white nationalists were also in the area. [One posted a social media message later about the rain having driven “Antifa” away](#), and making clear that [he had been in the area with another racist associate](#).

Conclusion

Predictably, there was no “antifa” uprising on November 4. Thankfully, [the November 4 conspiracy theories weaved by the far-Right](#) did not result in acts of violence against bystanders, as some of us had feared could have happened. Whereas for some people the November 4 conspiracy theories were to be believed literally, for others on the far-Right these scare stories were used as an organizing technique — to generate interest, boost messaging, or to portray their own ranks in a favorable light. As militant antifascists, we have little control over the fantasies of our opponents. However, we should resist the far-Right’s mass broadcast of lies as best as possible, by [being clear about what our movements stand for](#). As we continue pushing back against the gains made by the far-Right in recent times, we should be prepared for more instances of the Right targeting general Left-wing events.

Below are images of some far-Right forces in Atlanta on November 4. If you have further information about these individuals or about far-Right organizing in our region, please [get in contact](#).



Yosef Ozia’s Proud Boy group marches toward Little Five Points



Andrew Canfield turning toward camera.





Jonathan Stevens (Proud Boys) on left.









William Blackburn livestreaming.





This guy also left a trail of InfoWars stickers throughout Little Five Points.



antifa atl / November 15, 2017 / Alt-Lite, Alt-Right, Andrew Canfield, Atlanta, Cameron Padgett, Chris Hill, Georgia Security Force III%, InfoWars, Islamophobia, James Stachowiak, Joe Proenza, Jonathan Stevens, Joseph Norman Ozia, March Against Sharia, Militia, Proud Boys, William Blackburn, Yosef Ozia

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